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Question Time: What to do about Syria?

How should Congress vote on a strike?

By Rob Burgess
Tribune night editor

[**Editor's note**: To participate in future queries, keep an eye on our Twitter and Facebook accounts.]

Last week, when we first asked this question, the possibility of the U.S. striking Syria seemed much higher. President Barack Obama had asked Congress for authorization, and it looked like the gears of war were beginning to churn to life once again. As of Sunday, with the Congress' vote on hold, a chemical weapons deal may have been reached. Still, the situation remains fluid. So, we wanted to know: "What do you think Congress should do about Syria?" It should be noted the vast majority of the responses we received on Facebook were against military action. Only a handful felt the other way. However you feel, don't let your voice go unheard. Find and contact your representative at www.house.gov/representatives/find/ and let them know what you think.

Your answers

“Simple answer. The U.S. should stay out of it.” — **Scott Gregory**

“Anything but ignore it! Is the Geneva Protocol so easily forgotten? … It may be an old set of treaties that never properly involved the U.S., it is a solid set of rules to conduct military business by. If no other country wants to stand up, maybe we should. I’m not saying warfare necessarily, but some political action.” — **Dustin Riddle**

“I say if Congress wants to send anyone they can go themselves. They live lavish lives unbound by the laws they pass. They have already been paid far beyond what any soldier has, without a single sacrifice to our country. Over half the year they sit on deck, while we turn the gears of their prosperity. Forty hours a week, only to sludge along like weary slaves. We as citizens have done nothing to have to push into another war. They want blood, let them bleed. It’s the same thing all over again, the bully seeking power and greed.” — **Rickie L. Featherstone**

“Assad is committing genocide against his own people. We should have him arrested by an international tribunal and sent to the Hague and tried for gassing and international crimes. And hang him. Another ‘strong man’ like Bin Laden, Saddam, etc. He needs to go. And the international community should be ashamed of themselves for leaving this all on the U.S. Their response considering the Geneva Conventions is disgusting.” — **Francine**

Jewett

Our answers

“Let them fight their own fight. I could see us objecting to what they’re doing, but we don’t need to send our troops into another foreign hostile nation. They’ve been fighting for hundreds of years. I don’t think our involvement will help the situation.” — **Mike Fletcher**

“Russian leader Vladimir Putin called President Obama out in an Op-Ed in the New York Times this week. It’s pretty unprecedented territory here with a leader from a foreign country addressing our nation through print media. I wonder if Obama knew this was coming? I would’ve loved to have been a fly on the wall in the board room at the Times when the pros and cons were weighed on whether to run with this or not. Agree or disagree with Putin’s disposition, it is remarkably well-written. It may be debatable how much of this came straight from Putin and how much of it came from a staff speech writer. I don’t think you can debate our position on Syria without pointing out how much Obama’s opponents were head over heels to back President Bush when Bush fabricated the idea of weapons of mass destruction to drum up support to invade Iraq, preying on a nation still reeling from the aftermath of 9/11 to get vengeance for his Dad. With that said, I really don’t support military action on Syria. I’m tired of the U.S. playing the role of

world police. We have a litany of our own problems, no matter who you blame for them, right here on our home soil. Your move, Obama." — **Josh Sigler**

"Let the Israelis handle it. If it escalates, then it does." — **Pedro Velazco**

"I read that too, Josh, and I was also impressed. I never thought I'd say this, but I agree with Putin. The idea of the U.S. lecturing any other nations on the use of chemical weapons is pretty comical based on our own history and the history of those we support. Lest we forget the blind eye we turned when our then-friend Saddam Hussein used them in the '80s. It's been interesting to see Republicans who were all for invading Iraq and Afghanistan shy away from a similar conflict because of their reflexive hatred of anything Obama proposes. It reminds me of the Heritage Foundation protesting the Affordable Care Act, even though it was originally their idea. It almost seems accidental, but this may have built enough of a consensus to stop the strike, which I'm thankful for. I am still wary another conflict may be around the corner for us. We're dangerously close to not having an active war going, and you know how much the military industrial complex hates that idea!" — **Rob Burgess**

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